



Recommendations For Physical Activity Policies In Utah Schools



Every child fit, healthy and ready to learn

Elementary Schools

- Implement the Physical Education Core Curriculum (Utah State Office of Education) in each elementary school.
- Aim for daily physical education instruction and activity for each elementary school child, with a goal of 150 minutes per week.
- Include at least two recess periods with active play each day.
- Restrict the use of recess as a reward or withholding recess as a punishment.
- Establish and promote safe routes for walking to and from school.
- Establish recess as an important time of day for children and teachers and not a time for remediation.
- Alter school schedules to allow for recess before lunch.

Secondary Schools

- Implement the Physical Education Core Curriculum (Utah State Office of Education) in each secondary school.
- Prioritize instruction that emphasizes activities, knowledge and skills for lifelong physical fitness.
- Include and promote intramural sports and fitness activities that emphasize involvement of all students in addition to formal athletic programs.
- Establish and promote safe routes for walking and biking to school.

References

- A majority of student leaders (72%) feel schools should make physical activity for all students a priority, with 81% calling for more students to get involved in physical activity and 56% stressing the importance of having more physical education classes [24].
- The vast majority of parents (95%) think "physical education should be part of a school curriculum for all students in grades K-12" [25].
- David Satcher, the former U.S. Surgeon General and chair of the Action for Healthy Kids Initiative, calls for all students to receive quality physical education on a daily basis [26].
- The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) calls for all students to receive quality physical education as an integral part of K-12 education. All states, says NASPE, should set minimum standards of achievement in physical education and should develop standards for physical education based on the National Standards for Physical Education, which recommend 150 minutes per week of physical education instruction for elementary students and 225 minutes per week for secondary students [12].
- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) calls for sequential physical education

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that helps students develop the skills and knowledge to enjoy and maintain a lifelong physically active lifestyle [8]. "Nearly 200 studies on the effect of exercise on cognitive functioning suggest that physical activity supports learning" [13].

- Two studies demonstrated that providing more time for physical activity (by reducing class time) can lead to increased test scores, particularly in the area of mathematics [14], [15], and another study linked physical activity programs to stronger academic achievement, increased concentration, and improved math, reading, and writing test scores [16].
- The California correlation of the SAT-9 with the Fitnessgram, says California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin, "provides compelling evidence that the physical well-being of students has a direct impact on their ability to achieve academically. We now have the proof we've been looking for: students achieve best when they are physically fit. Thousands of years ago, the Greeks understood the importance of improving spirit, mind, and body. The research presented here validates their philosophic approach with scientific validation" [17].
- Children with daily physical education exhibit better attendance, a more positive attitude to school, and superior academic performance [18].
- From the Comprehensive School Health Program in McComb, Mississippi, to the SPARK Program founded at San Diego State University, school administrators and education researchers are demonstrating again and again that physical education and physical activity may strengthen academic achievement, self-esteem, and mental health—all leading to stronger student performance [19], [20], [21], [22].
- "Evidence suggests," says the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, "that time spent in physical education does not decrease learning in other subjects. Youth who spend less time in other subjects to allow for regular physical education have been shown to do equally well or better in academic classes"

[1] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity. 2001. [2] JAMA. 2002; 288:1723-1727. [3] Associated Press. Diabetes in children set to soar. MSNBC. June 16, 2003. [4] Pinhas-Harniel, O., et al. Increase incidence of non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus among adolescents. The Journal of Pediatric 1996; 128: 608-615. [5] Department of Health and Human Services. Steps to a Healthier US: The Power of Prevention. 2003. [6] Department of Health and Human Services. Steps to a Healthier US: Prevention Strategies That Work. 2003. [7] International Life Sciences Institute. Improving Children's Health through Physical Activity: A New Opportunity, A Survey of Parents and Children about Physical Activity Patterns. 1997. [8] Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Guidelines for School and Community Programs: Promoting Lifelong Physical Activity. 1997. [9] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Fact sheet. Kids Walk-to-School Program. 2002. [10] Action for Healthy Kids. National Profile. 2002. [11] Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Physical activity and good nutrition: essential elements to prevent chronic diseases and obesity. At a Glance. 2003. [12] National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). Shape of the Nation Report. 2001. [13] Etnier, J. L., Salazar, W., Landers, D. M., Petruzzello, S. J., Han, M., & Nowell, P. The influence of physical fitness and exercise upon cognitive functioning: a meta-analysis. Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology (1997); 19(3): 249-277. [14] Shephard, R.J., Volle, M., Lavalee, M., LaBarre, R., Jequier, J.C., Rajic, M. Required physical activity and academic grades: a controlled longitudinal study. In: Limarinen and Valimaki, editors. Children and Sport. Berlin: Springer Verlag, 1984. 58-63. [15] Shephard, R.J. Curricular physical activity and academic performance. Pediatric Exercise Science 1997; 9: 113-126. [16] Symons, C.W., Cinelli, B., James, T.C., Groff, P. Bridging student health risks and academic achievement through comprehensive school health programs. Journal of School Health 1997; 67(6): 220-227. [17] National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). New study supports physically fit kids perform better academically. 2002. [18] National Association for Sport and Physical Education/Council of Physical Education for Children. Physical education is critical to a complete education. 2001. [19] Cooper, Pat. Our journey to good health. School Administrator. January 2003. [20] Sallis, J. F., McKenzie, T. L., Kolody, B., Lewis, M., Marshall, S., and Rosengard, P. Effects of health-related physical education on academic achievement: Project SPARK. Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport 1999; 70: 127-134. [21] Keays, J., and Allison, R. The effects of regular moderate to vigorous physical activity on student outcomes: A review. Canadian Journal of Public Health 1995; 86: 62-66. [22] Shephard, R.J. Habitual physical activity and academic performance. Nutrition Reviews 1996; 54(4 supplement): S32-S36. [23] President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. Physical activity promotion and school physical education. Physical Activity and Fitness Research Digest. 1999. [24] Action for Healthy Kids. Student Poll. 2002. [25] National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). Parents' views of children's health and fitness. 2003. [26] Satcher, D. Pound-foolish. Education Week. 2002. [27] AFHK/NASSP School Principal Leadership Poll, conducted with state leaders of National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2002.